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***The Mediation Puzzle***



Mediation is much like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Participants bring the pieces to the table and the mediator's task is to assist the parties in putting the pieces in place. To do this, a well-defined picture of the conflict is necessary.

The challenge for the mediator is when one party struggles to articulate their perception of the conflict story. Too little detail puts the process in danger of failing because only one version of the conflict story dominates the process.

Stringer (2004) states, "Conflict stories comprise the heart and soul of mediation. Beneath their surface-level depictions of events, they reveal the underlying assumptions of the disputing parties, their expectations of each other, and the roles they cast for themselves." Understanding where parties have been and where they are now gives the mediator the clues needed to help the parties move forward.

Asking open-ended questions and patience enables a hesitant or less articulate participant share their story. Someone who is hesitant may be so because they are uncomfortable sharing in front of the other party. A caucus can alleviate the discomfort by allowing the party to share more confidently with the mediator.

It's also important to make sure there is enough time for all parties to tell their stories. Time constraints limit story telling so careful scheduling becomes essential in allowing time for parties to share.

Overall, mediators have a range of tools to use to reveal a rich picture of the conflict story so that the puzzle comes together in a way that leads to a sustainable agreement.

**Tom Stringer** performs mediations for the Los Angeles Superior Court, including the Civil Harassment division and Small Claims Appeals in Santa Monica.

## **Beginning Mediation Training April 2016**



*The Neighborhood Mediation Center trainers Claudia Wahl and Monica Kales presented a 40-hour, skill based, facilitative mediation training in April. The training was offered through the UNR Extended Studies program and held at the Redfield Campus. This highly interactive training offered participants the opportunity to understand how conflict can result in a positive outcome through the mediation process. Participants practiced the skills of a mediator through activities and role plays. Participants are invited to volunteer for the mediation center and continue to build skills under the guidance of a mentor mediator until ready to mediate on their own. The training class is offered every year and the next training will take place the third week of April 2017.*

*To stay informed of upcoming trainings check the NMC website under the training tab [www.mediatenmc.org](http://www.mediatenmc.org).*

## ***Nevada Dispute Resolution Coalition May 2016 Training***



***Anna Bergreen explaining how memories are made...***

Anna Bergreen & Elise Chambers were the presenters for this year's NDRC Annual Training on Brain Science and Mediation Skills. There were many interesting takeaways that included the effects of stress and trauma on the brain, triggers that produce automatic reactions, and how our brains are capable of re-writing ways mediators can help calm emotional participants and expand a client's capacity for accepting alternate perspectives. Thank you to the trainers and NDRC for an enlightening presentation.

*ACR  
Conference  
Update  
2016*

# Upcoming Conferences



Montreal, August 9-14,  
2016

The goal of the WSF 2016 is to gather tens of thousands of people from groups in civil society, organizations and social movements who want to build a sustainable and inclusive world, where every person and every people has its place and can make its voice heard. <https://fsm2016.org/en/participer/sinscrire/>



[www.acrnet.org/](http://www.acrnet.org/)

## CHILD CUSTODY MEDIATION TRAINING



**Trainer & Mediator  
Margaret Crowley Esq.**

**Date: June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Time: 9:00-5:00  
Place: TBA  
Cost: \$200.00  
6.5 CLE credits (pending)**

**To register or for more information, please contact Margaret at (775) 233-6711 or [Margaret@Crowleymediation.com](mailto:Margaret@Crowleymediation.com), [www.Crowleymediation.com](http://www.Crowleymediation.com)**

### AGENDA

- 9:00-9:15 INTRODUCTION
- 9:15-10:00 CUSTODY MEDIATION OVERVIEW
- 10:00-10:30 PARTY ORIENTATION
- 10:30-10:45 BREAK
- 10:45-11:00 TYPES OF CUSTODY
- 11:00-12:00 ELEMENTS OF A PARENTING PLAN
- 12:00-1:00 LUNCH
- 1:00-1:30 ELEMENTS OF A PARENTING PLAN CONT'D
- 1:30-2:30 COMMON ISSUES IN CHILD CUSTODY MEDIATION
- 2:30-2:45 BREAK
- 2:45-4:45 ROLE PLAY/DEBRIEF
- 4:45-5:00 WRAP UP AND ADJOURN

**Nevada courts are increasingly looking to mediation to help parties resolve disputes. Not only is child custody mediation mandated in some jurisdictions, it has proven to be a very effective tool for parents. Mediation allows parents to create the best possible future for themselves and their children. This training is intended for mediators who have already taken a 40 hour basic mediation course.**



## *From the Program Director's Corner.....*

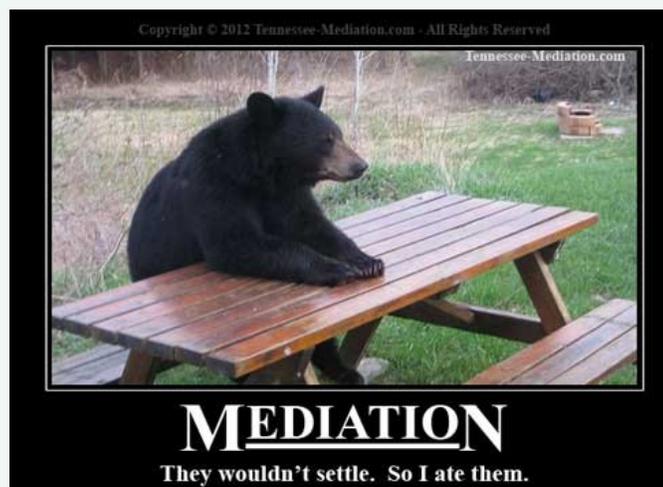
### *The Court Coordinator's Role*

When the mandatory Small Claims Mediation program began in March of 2015, NMC established the position of **Court Coordinator** with the intention of providing a consistent and professional presentation to the Court and to the parties to the cases. Our volunteer coordinators, Nancy Dyer (Tuesdays), Patty Herzog (formerly Wednesdays) and Sandy Delehanty (currently Wednesdays) have consistently provided that service for NMC and for the Court.

The job of the coordinator is to be the **point person** at court for NMC, to manage the flow of Small Claims mediation each day, and to see that NMC's protocols for providing a professional and effective mediation program are implemented. The coordinators interface with court clerks, bailiffs, parties and mediators in a variety of ways. They work with the clerk in court, assign cases to volunteer mediators, organize case paperwork, and answer questions for both parties and mediators in addition to mediating their own cases.

Most parties seem to have adjusted to being scheduled for mediation rather than trial and are generally cooperative during the process. Even though there can be some initial resistance to the "possibilities of mediation", many parties end up being surprised and pleased that mediation was an option. On rare occasions, there are parties who only want to see a judge and who are challenging even during the initial courtroom presentation as well as during mediation. Another piece of the coordinator's role is to respond to these parties in court and provide support to mediators as needed during mediation with disgruntled participants.

Coordinators volunteer 2-4 hours per week for NMC. They provide a wonderful service to the Center, to the Court and to the community, as do all of our volunteer mediators. Thank you, coordinators, for your time, expertise and dedication to mediation in



**Mediator  
Profile:  
Lynn C.  
Thompson**



***“Learn to  
listen.  
Opportunity  
sometimes  
knocks very  
softly.”***

***~ H. Jackson  
Brown, Jr.***

**Lynn Thompson** is one of NMC’s mediators who regularly volunteers for the Reno Justice Court Mandatory Mediation program. After practicing law in the civil litigation arena for more than 30 years, Lynn decided to focus on mediation as an alternative to litigation for dispute resolution. Now, Lynn thoroughly enjoys working with parties outside of the courtroom to explore and create solutions for resolving conflicts.

Born and raised in San Francisco and the Bay Area, Lynn attended U.C. Berkeley for her undergraduate work. During her junior year, Lynn lived and studied in Aix-en-Provence, a small town in the South of France. This experience, offered as part of U.C. Berkeley’s Studies Abroad Program, provided incredible opportunities to learn about different cultures and languages. Lynn traveled and explored many parts of Europe before she returned to complete her studies at U.C. Berkeley.

Lynn also worked and lived in Washington D.C and San Francisco before deciding to attend the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento. Lynn was thrilled to learn that McGeorge offered a post-graduate International Law program in Salzburg, Austria. After graduation, Lynn happily returned to Europe for more adventure and discovery. The program also arranged Lynn’s internship in Paris with the international oil company, “Total”. This was an unforgettable and cherished experience.

After returning to San Francisco, Lynn was offered a job in Las Vegas to work on the MGM Grand Hotel Fire case. Many of her McGeorge classmates joined this complex litigation team. The MGM Grand experience launched Lynn’s legal career in civil litigation which later continued in San Francisco.

Ten years later, Lynn returned to Nevada after she married her husband and law school classmate, Frank Thompson. A few years later, their son, Connor, was born and Lynn continued to work part-time primarily representing defendants in various civil matters. As Frank pursued his personal injury practice, Lynn often assisted him in representing plaintiffs who had been injured in various types of accidents.

Working with plaintiffs to help them recover from physical and emotional injuries as a result of negligent or reckless conduct through litigation has been a rewarding, but all too often, frustrating experience. Lynn had used alternative dispute resolution methods, including mediation, throughout her career. She decided to take the basic mediation course at her former law school, McGeorge. At that time, NMC asked their volunteers to take the UNR Extension Basic Mediation training. Lynn loved that training and has been a volunteer with NMC since 2013.

Lynn also mediates with the Federal District Court Early Inmate Panel which works with the Attorney General’s office to resolve civil rights complaints filed by inmates incarcerated within the Nevada State Prison system. Lynn’s mediation practice, Reno Tahoe Mediation, focuses on business and contract disputes, personal injury, trust and estate matters. Lynn is also experienced in custody, dependency and more. Please feel free to contact Lynn at [lynnthom@msn.com](mailto:lynnthom@msn.com) or 828-1906 for a free consultation.